

Awarding Minnesota Border to Border Broadband Grants ---2016 Selection Criteria & Weights---

DEED will award grants to projects that provide the highest return in public benefits for the public costs incurred and meet all of the statutory requirements. To evaluate the applications for public benefits with respect to the costs incurred, the law specifies priorities that DEED must consider.

To fulfill this requirement of reviewing applications in an objective and fair manner, applications will be reviewed and evaluated by a team compiled by DEED and using the following criteria and point values to assist in systematically awarding grants. These criteria reflect information sought via the grant application questions. To ensure that your application receives its maximum point total, please be sure to provide complete responses to the information requested in the application.

120 points possible

Unserved and/or underserved households and businesses passed: 0 to 20 points

- Amount of increase in speed from current service to reach state speed goals and above combined with number of passings determines points awarded.

(SEE Appendix I table below on scoring anticipated improvements)

Grant request amount: 0 to 10 points

- Percent of grant request compared to eligible project costs. *(A higher local match percentage above 50% will result in a higher application score in this category.)*

(SEE Appendix II table below on scoring grant and local match amount)

Readiness: 0 to 25 points

- Demonstration of project readiness. Examples include a solid engineering and design plan, financing secured, other approvals secured or in process, project schedule thorough and complete, and evidence of readiness to build, manage and operate the project.
- Comprehensive proposal: partners in place, application complete and well prepared, budget table complete.
- Initial five-year service (speed tiers and pricing) offers service at or above state speed goal at reasonable prices including unbundled broadband service; financial plan described.

Sustainability: 0 to 25 points

- Financial soundness and efficiencies. Examples include identification of eligible costs, leveraging existing broadband, financing is secured, additional costs identified, need for funding clearly identified, financial plan, financial strength demonstrated, and a resolution/applicant affidavit.
- Organizational capability. Examples include quality/experience of partners and project manager, organizational charts, company history and resumes.
- Technical demonstration. Examples include a clear and concise project description, commitment to offering service for a minimum of five years, a realistic project schedule that syncs with broadband infrastructure to be provided and the budget table, a clear documentation of areas to be served, and provision of MN vendor ID number and MN identification number and federal employer identification number.

Community support/partnership: 0 to 15 points

- Evidence of community support, including project partners and demonstration of customer interest such as potential/current customer surveys as to desire/need for improved service; letters of support, and take-rate estimates.
- Benefits to community anchor institutions. Provide a list of significant community institutions and how they will benefit. Examples of specific types of community institutions would include libraries, fire halls, government & community centers, township halls; hospitals and nursing homes;, and educational institutions.) Provide some examples of how broadband will be incorporated into specific community programs.

Economic Development & Community Impact Review: 0 to 15 points

- Does the project demonstrate economic development impacts and how? This might include documenting via specific impact statements from businesses as to business retention, expansion, and attraction impact, including home-based businesses and telecommuting. Also evidence of education, health and public safety benefits and general quality of life improvement.
- Is project area economically distressed?¹ *(NOTE: This criteria area applies to all application categories: unserved, underserved, and low income areas funding. It must be answered if you are applying for the low income areas funding.)*² This would include documentation that in the proposed project area unemployment, poverty or population loss are significantly greater than statewide average, and/or would reference median household income and/or percent of students eligible for free or reduced school lunches.

Adoption Assistance: 0 to 10 points

(NOTE: This criteria area applies to all application categories: unserved, underserved, and low income areas funding. It must be answered if you are applying for the low income areas funding.)

- Technical support and training provided.
- Information on promoting broadband adoption and use.
- Is there a low income assistance program and a description of its depth and breadth?

¹ 2015 Minnesota Statutes 116J.395, Subd. 6, Section 4. “serve economically distressed areas of the state, as measured by indices of unemployment, poverty, or population loss that are significantly greater than the statewide average”

² If you are applying for the \$500,000 Low Income Areas funding assistance, you must demonstrate that a significant portion of the households in the project area are at less than or equal to 200 percent of the most recent calculation of the United States federal poverty guidelines published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

APPENDIX I: Anticipated Improvements Scoring Table

Unserved and underserved households and businesses passed: 0 to 20 points

- Amount of increase in speed from current service to reach state speed goals and above
- Number of locations (passings) in project area

Points are awarded as per the tables below for applications to serve an unserved and/or underserved area. If the application includes only unserved locations or only underserved locations, the point total from the appropriate table is doubled and included on the score sheet. If the application includes both unserved and underserved locations, the point total from each table is added and included on the score sheet.

Application for unserved area: (numbers show scoring based on improvements)

Number of passings	~0/0 to 25/3	~4/1 to 25/3	~10/1 to 25/3	~0/0 to 100/20	~4/1 to 100/20	~10/1 to 100/20	~0/0 to 1G/1G	~4/1 to 1G/1G	~10/1 to 1G/1G
0-100	4	3	2	6	5	4	9	8	7
Over 100	5	4	3	7	6	5	10	9	8

Application for underserved area: (numbers show scoring based on improvements)

Number of passings	~25/3 to 100/20	~40/5 to 100/20	~25/3 to 300/20	~40/5 to 300/20	~25/3 to 1G/1G	~40/5 to 1G/1G
0-50	4	3	6	5	8	7
51-500	5	4	7	6	9	8
Over 500	6	5	8	7	10	9

APPENDIX II - Grant Request Amount Scoring Table**Grant Request Amount:** *0 to 10 points*

- Percent of grant request compared to eligible project costs. A higher local match percentage (above 51%) will result in a higher application score in this category.

Percent of eligible project costs requested	Points
Less than 30%	10
30 to 39%	7
40 to 45%	4
46 to 48%	2
49 to 50%	0